## IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

MARLAINA WILLIAMS,

CIVIL DIVISION

Plaintiff;

Docket No.:

VS.

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,

COMPLAINT IN CIVIL ACTION

Defendant.

Filed on behalf of Plaintiff: MARLAINA WILLIAMS

Counsel of Record for this Party: Steven Auerbach, Esquire

Law Office of Steven T. Auerbach

822 Montgomery Ave.

Suite 210

Narberth, PA. 19072 Ph: (215) 964-4410 Fax: (610) 667-7305

Steven@TheAuerbachFirm.com

Pa. I.D. #317309

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

## IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

MARLAINA WILLIAMS,		)	CIVIL DIVISION
	Plaintiff;	)	
		)	Docket No.:
VS.		)	
		)	
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,		)	
	Defendant.	)	

#### I. COMPLAINT IN CIVIL ACTION

Marlaina Williams ("Ms. Williams" or "Plaintiff"), by her attorney, Steven Auerbach, complaining of City of Philadelphia ("Defendant" or "Employer"), alleges:

#### **II. INTRODUCTION**

- 1. This action is brought to remedy claims of employment discrimination on the basis of sex and religion under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.
- 2. Plaintiff seeks injunctive and declaratory relief, economic, compensatory, and punitive damages, attorneys' fees and all other appropriate relief pursuant to governing law.

#### III. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 3. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 1343(a) (4) because it arises under the laws of the United States and seeks redress for violation of federal laws.
- 4. This Court may properly maintain personal jurisdiction over Defendant because its contacts with this state and this judicial district are sufficient for the exercise of jurisdiction over Defendant to comply with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice, satisfying the

standard set forth by the United States Supreme Court in *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, 326 U.S, 310 (1945) and its progeny.

5. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b)(1) and (b)(2), venue is properly laid in this district because all of the acts and/or omissions giving rise to the claims set forth herein occurred in this judicial district, and Defendants are deemed to reside where they are subject to personal jurisdiction, rendering Defendant a resident of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

#### **IV. PARTIES**

- 6. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.
- 7. Plaintiff Marlaina Williams is an adult female Muslim who resides in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- 8. At all times relevant to this action, Plaintiff was an "Employee" of the Defendant within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. §2000e-f and related state law(s).
- 9. Defendant City of Philadelphia is a political subdivision organized under the laws of Pennsylvania with a principal place of business in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- 10. Defendant was an "Employer" of the Plaintiff within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. §2000e-(b), (g), and (h).
- 11. At all times relevant herein, Defendant acted by and through its agents, servants and employees, each of whom acted at all times relevant herein in the course and scope of their employment with and for Defendant.
- 12. Defendant has and continues to employ over fifteen (15) employees per calendar year for at least the last five (5) years, and Defendant engages in a variety of revenue-generating, business relationships.

#### V. EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

- 13. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.
- 14. Plaintiff has exhausted her administrative remedies.
- 15. On June 21, 2017, Plaintiff filed a complaint of hostile work environment and sexual and religious harassment with the Mayor's Office of Labor Relations ("Office of Labor Relations") against her supervisor and agent of Defendant, Sheriff Jewell Williams ("Sheriff Williams").
- 16. Plaintiff then filed a timely initial charge of employment discrimination with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") on September 7, 2017 and directed same to cross-file with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission ("PHRC").
- 18. On November 16, 2017, Plaintiff filed an amendment to her EEOC charge.
- 19. On January 26, 2018, Plaintiff received notice from the Office of Labor Relations announcing in pertinent part, "The investigation <u>did</u> sustain, by corroborative evidence, the allegation of hostile work environment based on inappropriate comments by Sheriff Williams that violate the City's EEO & Sexual Harassment Policy." A true and correct copy of this notice is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.
- 20. Plaintiff received her Right to Sue Notice from the EEOC on February 28, 2018. A true and correct copy of this notice is attached hereto as Exhibit 2.
- 21. Plaintiff commenced this instant un-amended action within ninety (90) days of receipt of her Right to Sue Notice.

#### VI. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

22. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.

- 23. In February 19, 2013 and extending through June 19, 2017 (the "Term of Employment"), Plaintiff worked for Defendant in a variety of capacities.
- 24. During the Term of Employment, Plaintiff was subject to harassing and discriminatory conduct related to sex and religion.
- 25. With respect to sexual harassment and discrimination, Plaintiff was repeatedly the subject of unwelcomed sexual advances and comments.
- 26. Sheriff Williams expressed his sexual interest in Plaintiff through many comments including one inquiry as to whether "he had a 'chance' with her."
- 27. On multiple occasions, Sheriff Williams would summon Plaintiff to his office, steer her into the corner, and attempt to kiss her.
- 28. On other occasions, Sheriff Williams invited Plaintiff on vacations for the express purpose of a romantic liaison.
- 29. On or after December 2013, Sheriff Williams became aware that Plaintiff was in a romantic relationship with another Employee, Sgt. Guess. From that point forward, Sheriff Williams expressed his disapproval and jealousy of this relationship in a variety of ways:
  - a) I'm jealous that he [Sgt. Guess] gets to go home with you and not me; and
  - b) I'm hating on your relationship; and
  - c) You should leave him [Sgt. Guess] and be with me; and
  - d) How could you work for me and date someone in my office; and
  - e) I'm gonna transfer your boyfriend and put him on the overnight shift so y'all can't spend any time together; and

- f) Your son should really be mine and your name should really be Marliana Jewell
   Williams; and
- g) I haven't had sex in two years, so if I'm not happy no one's gonna be happy.
- 30. In addition to statements made directly by Sheriff Williams, an atmosphere was purposefully created wherein other employees felt at liberty to discuss intimate details of Plaintiff's relationship.
- 31. Sheriff Williams' unwelcomed and inappropriate comments directed to Plaintiff were also anti-muslim:
  - a) Sgt. Guess must have made you change your religion 'cause you don't wear that stuff any more [Muslim modesty garb]; and
  - b) Now that you're not with Sgt. Guess [who is a practicing Christian], I guess you're back to being a Muslim again.
- 32. As a consequence of her Employer's conduct, Plaintiff suffered a panic attack in June 2016 and has since suffered related health issues as a result of the discrimination and harassment she was forced to endure.
- 33. As a further consequence of her Employer's offensive conduce, Plaintiff resigned her position on June 19, 2017.

# COUNT I: WILLIAMS V. CITY OF PHILADELPHIA <u>Violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VII")</u> (Sex)

- 34. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.
- 35. In violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Defendant discriminated against Plaintiff on the basis of her sex and by failing to protect her from pier/supervisor misconduct.

- 36. Defendant acted knowingly, willfully, and/or negligently in violation of this Act.
- 37. Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer irreparable mental and physical injury as well as monetary damages as a result of Defendant's discriminatory conduct as described herein.

# COUNT II: WILLIAMS V. CITY OF PHILADELPHIA <u>Violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VII")</u> (Religion)

- 38. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.
- 39. In violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Defendant discriminated against Plaintiff on the basis of her religion by failing to protect her from pier/supervisor misconduct.
- 40. Defendant acted knowingly, willfully, and/or negligently in violation of this Act.
- 41. Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer irreparable mental and physical injury as well as monetary damages as a result of Defendant's discriminatory conduct as described herein.

#### PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that this Court enter an Order providing:

- a. That the Court issue a declaratory judgment that the acts, policies, and practices complained herein are in violation of Title VII; and
- b. That the Court enjoin Defendant from continuing its acts, policies, and practices which violate Title VII; and
- c. Directing Defendant to reinstate Plaintiff to the position she would have occupied but for Defendant's unlawful conduct, making her whole for all earning she would have received but for Defendant's unlawful conduct, including but not limited to wages, bonuses and other lost benefits; and

d. Directing Defendant to make Plaintiff whole by providing compensation for past and

future pecuniary losses resulting from the unlawful employment practices described

above, with interest, in amounts to be determined at trial pursuant; and

e. Directing Defendant to make Plaintiff whole by providing compensation for past and

future non-pecuniary losses caused by the above unlawful conduct, including pain and

suffering, emotional distress, indignity, loss of enjoyment of life, loss of self-esteem, and

humiliation, in amounts to be determined at trial; and

f. Directing Defendant to pay Plaintiff punitive damages for its malicious and reckless

conduct described above, in amounts to be determined at trial; and

g. Granting such other relief as the Court deems necessary and proper.

**DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY** 

Pursuant to FRCP 38(b), Plaintiff demands a trial by jury on all questions of fact raised

by the complaint.

Dated: 3/28/18

Respectfully Submitted,

By:

Steven Auerbach

822 Montgomery Ave.

Suite 210

Narberth, PA. 19072 Ph: (215) 964-4410

Fax: (610) 667-7305

#### IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

MARLAINA WILLIAMS.	) CIVIL DIVISION
Plaintiff:	)
	) Docket No.:
Vs.	)
	)
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,	)
<u>Defenda</u>	<u>nt.</u> )

#### **VERIFICATION**

I, Marlaina Williams, hereby state I am the plaintiff in this action, and I verify that the statements made in the foregoing pleading are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that false statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 28 U.S.C. §1746 relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Dated: 3/28/18 Marlaina Hilliams
MARLAINA WILLIAMS

# Exhibit 1



### City of Philadelphia

Mayor's Office of Labor Relations Employee Relations Unit 1515 Arch Street, 16th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19102-1675 p.1

Monica Marchetti-Brock, Director

January 26, 2018

Ms. Marlaina Williams
5006 N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19141

Dear Ms. Williams,

This letter is sent to apprise you of the results of the investigation of your complaint of Hostile Work Environment based on sexual harassment and religion against Sheriff Williams.

A thorough investigation has been conducted into the allegation. The individual you named as a respondent and those you cited as witnesses were interviewed, and each situation was examined.

The result of the investigation is as follows: The investigation did sustain, by corroborative evidence, the allegation of hostile work environment based on inappropriate comments by Sheriff Williams that violate the City's EEO & Sexual Harassment Policy.

The investigation has informed the department of the findings. In addition, the Office of Human Resources has also been informed of the results of the investigation who may take remedial action that they deem appropriate.

We appreciate you bringing this matter to our attention. If you need assistance in the future do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

William A. Twardzik

William a. Twarty &

Deputy Director

# Exhibit 2

U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION EEOC Form 161-B (11/16) NOTICE OF RIGHT TO SUE (ISSUED ON REQUEST) Marlaina Williams From: Philadelphia District Office 5006 N 12th St, 1st Flr 801 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19141 **Suite 1300** Philadelphia, PA 19107 On behalf of person(s) aggrieved whose identity is CONFIDENTIAL (29 CFR §1601.7(a)) EEOC Charge No. **EEOC Representative** Telephone No. Legal Unit, 530-2017-03860 Legal Technician (215) 440-2828 (See also the additional information enclosed with this form.) NOTICE TO THE PERSON AGGRIEVED: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA): This is your Notice of Right to Sue, issued under Title VII, the ADA or GINA based on the above-numbered charge. It has been issued at your request. Your lawsuit under Title VII, the ADA or GINA must be filed in a federal or state court WITHIN 90 DAYS of your receipt of this notice; or your right to sue based on this charge will be lost. (The time limit for filing suit based on a claim under state law may be different.) More than 180 days have passed since the filing of this charge. Less than 180 days have passed since the filing of this charge, but I have determined that it is unlikely that the EEOC will be able to complete its administrative processing within 180 days from the filing of this charge. The EEOC is terminating its processing of this charge. The EEOC will continue to process this charge. Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA): You may sue under the ADEA at any time from 60 days after the charge was filed until 90 days after you receive notice that we have completed action on the charge. In this regard, the paragraph marked below applies to your case: The EEOC is closing your case. Therefore, your lawsuit under the ADEA must be filed in federal or state court WITHIN 90 DAYS of your receipt of this Notice. Otherwise, your right to sue based on the above-numbered charge will be lost. The EEOC is continuing its handling of your ADEA case. However, if 60 days have passed since the filing of the charge, you may file suit in federal or state court under the ADEA at this time. Equal Pay Act (EPA): You already have the right to sue under the EPA (filing an EEOC charge is not required.) EPA suits must be brought in federal or state court within 2 years (3 years for willful violations) of the alleged EPA underpayment. This means that backpay due for any violations that occurred more than 2 years (3 years) before you file suit may not be collectible. If you file suit, based on this charge, please send a copy of your court complaint to this office. On behalf of the Commission Enclosures(s) Jamie R. Williamson,

**District Director** 

CC:

PHILADELPHIA LAW DEPARTMENT Linda Busillo (for Respondent) SR Legal Assistant Supervisor 1515 Arch Street, 16th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19102

Steven T. Auerbach, Esq. (for Charging Party) LAW OFFICE 822 Montgomery Ave, Ste 210 Narberth, PA 19072 JS 44 (Rev. 06/17)

#### **CIVIL COVER SHEET**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

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### IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

#### CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

**CIVIL ACTION** 

<b>Telephone</b>	FAX Number	E-Mail Address				
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(b) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits.						
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(Civ. 660) 10/02

Maclaina Williams

#### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA — DESIGNATION FORM assignment to appropriate calendar.	to be used by counsel to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of		
Address of Plaintiff: 5006 N. 12th St. 1st Plans Philo	adopa PA 19141		
Address of Plaintiff: 5006 N. 12th St. 1st Place Philadipin, PA 19141  Address of Defendant: One Parkway, 14th Floor, 1515 Arry Street, Philadiphia, PA 19102			
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(Use Reverse Side Fo	or Additional Space)		
Does this civil action involve a nongovernmental corporate party with any parent corporation (Attach two copies of the Disclosure Statement Form in accordance with Fed.R.Civ.P. 7.1			
Does this case involve multidistrict litigation possibilities?	Yes No		
RELATED CASE, IF ANY:  Case Number: Judge	Date Terminated:		
Civil cases are deemed related when yes is answered to any of the following questions:	But Italianaed.		
1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one	/		
2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior	Yes NoD		
action in this court?	or our promise or warms one year proviously terminated		
3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlie	Yes Not		
terminated action in this court?	Yes No		
4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil right	ghts case filed by the same individual?		
	Yes□ No□		
CIVIL: (Place V in ONE CATEGORY ONLY)			
A. Federal Question Cases:	B. Diversity Jurisdiction Cases:		
1.   Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts	1.   Insurance Contract and Other Contracts		
2. □ FELA	2.   Airplane Personal Injury		
3. □ Jones Act-Personal Injury	3.   Assault, Defamation		
4. □ Antitrust	4. □ Marine Personal Injury		
5. □ Patent	5.   Motor Vehicle Personal Injury		
6. Labor-Management Relations	6. D Other Personal Injury (Please specify)		
7. d'Civil Rights	7. Products Liability		
8. Habeas Corpus	8.   Products Liability — Asbestos		
9.  Securities Act(s) Cases	9. □ All other Diversity Cases		
10. □ Social Security Review Cases	(Please specify)		
11. □ All other Federal Question Cases (Please specify)			
ARBITRATION CER  (Check Appropriate counsel of record do hereby cer	Category)		
Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, Section 3(c)(2), that to the best of my knowledge an \$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs;	d belief, the damages recoverable in this civil action case exceed the sum of		
Relief other than monetary damages is sought.	0.10.0		
DATE: 3(28/18 Steven Averban, Esq., Attorney-at-Law	317309		
Attorney-at-Law  NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if the	Attorney I.D.# here has been compliance with F.R.C.P. 38.		
I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case is not related to any case now pending o	r within one year praviously terminated action in this action		
except as noted above.	one year previously terminated action in this court		
DATE: 3/28/18 Steven Averban, Esq.	317309		
DATE: 3/28/18 Steven Auchen, Esq.	Attorney I.D.#		

CIV. 609 (5/2012)